

# The Word

*"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth"*

John 1:14

## Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ

### Happy New Year!

January 1st marks the beginning of the calendar year and commonly begins with gatherings of friends, celebrations, and the establishment of new commitments -- *turning over a new leaf!*

September 1st marks the beginning of the Ecclesiastical year and is initiated by the Church with the Feast Day of the Indiction and celebrated with the Divine Liturgy -- again, a gathering of people, celebration, and establishment of commitment.

What then is the difference between the Church New Year and the Calendar New Year?

#### *The Gathering:*

January 1st gatherings are typically composed of familiar friends and family, most of whose company you look forward to, complemented by a few titled as obligatory! Other than the black sheep that was forced to attend, everyone attends voluntarily with a hope of enjoyment. The group is usually light-hearted and focused on a joyful respite during a day off of work.

September 1st invites a gathering at God's House, where those in attendance have a common faith that brings them together to give thanks to God for all of His gifts and further request that He continue to give to us. The individuals at this gathering come voluntarily because they want to. They arrive from various diverse backgrounds, yet are united in their belief and connection in God.

#### *The Celebration:*

January 1st BBQ, a cold drink, chips, salsa, college football, and if it's not too cold, a lawn game or two -- that is a great day! Whether potluck or not, the New Year's feast is usually bountiful. The day often revolves around the meal, as witnessed by the large group revolving around the BBQ or sampling

at the kitchen island. Games on TV, games in the toy room, or games in front and back yards complement the meal, and hopefully through the food and activities, something is offered for everyone. Some just stop by for a short visit, and some stay the entire day.

September 1st, the celebration is the Divine Liturgy. Surrounded by a community of common focus and need, once again this celebration is centered on the meal that is to be offered. Every word and movement leads up to the offering and reception of this meal, when Holy Communion is offered to the people, not simply addressing an appetite but rather the need of the soul. The experience of God is the result of this celebration, manifest in the healing of souls, the strengthening of pilgrimage, and the authentic occurrence of love. Specific to this celebration, the meal is complemented by enticement to all five senses: icons, architecture, gold, silver, woodwork, vestments, and fellow brothers-and-sisters-in-Christ all are *seen*. Hymns of praise are sung by fellow participants in the celebration and are *heard* by all. Icons are kissed, books are held, and at times fellow gatherers are embraced in our experience of *touching*. Incense is *smelled* from the moment that we enter the gathering space, and of course we *taste* when we receive the Holy Eucharist. The celebration is epic, affecting those in attendance at all substantive levels by providing for them what they truly need -- all in just over an hour!

#### *The Commitments:*

January 1st is synonymous with resolutions when individuals proclaim, either out loud or to themselves, new commitments that they are establishing for the new year. Whether addressing relationships, exercise, work, etc., typically New Year's resolutions are in response to some sort of behavior that the individual regrets and wants to change.

September 2012

September 1st commitments stemming from the gathering of the Divine Liturgy also propel individuals to change past behaviors from either years, weeks, or even minutes ago. When the celebration is experienced and the individual receives Holy Communion, a *clean slate* is received, as God has cleansed the soul and healed the individual. From that point on every decision is a new commitment that attempts to either nurture or neglect the gift of sanctification that God has provided.

#### *What is the Difference?*

Both New Year's events are positive and deserve a space on our calendar. Gatherings of fellowship, celebration, and the establishment of commitments are all positive when established in healthy regards. Yet, the September 1st Ecclesiastical New Year provides through the life of the Church an opportunity to substantively change your life for the better in ways that cannot take place in any other experience, because it is through the life and mysteries of Christ's Church that we tangibly experience God.

This New Year's (September 1st), *gather, celebrate, and make new commitments* that will truly edify your life and benefit your soul. Complemented with an altar boy retreat, we will celebrate the Ecclesiastical New Year with the Divine Liturgy at Nativity of Christ, and you are invited!

May our Lord, Who was born in a manger for our salvation, bless this new year as we will continually *gather, celebrate, and commit* in His name!

*Fr. Luke*

## September Services & Readings

Date/Time	Service	Epistle	Gospel
Sept 1 11:00 am	Beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year	I Timothy 2:1-7	Luke 4:16-22
Sept 2 9:30 am	13th Sunday of Matthew	I Corinth. 16:13-24	Matthew 21:33-42
Sept 8 9:30 am	Nativity of the Theotokos	Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28
Sept 9 9:30 am	Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross	Galatians 6:11-18	John 3:13-17
Sept 14 9:30 am	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	I Corinth. 1:18-24	John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30
Sept 16 9:30 am	Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross	Galatians 2:16-20	Mark 8:34- 9:1
Sept 23 9:30 am	1st Sunday of Luke	Galatians 4:22-27	Luke 5:1-11
Sept 30 9:30 am	2nd Sunday of Luke	I Corinth. 6:16-18;	Luke 6:31-36

## September Acolyte Schedule

All acolytes are asked to serve in September.

## September Candle Duty Schedule

Sept 2	Alex Slenkin, George Sotiras and Tony Kosmas
Sept 9	Chris Siefkas and Nick Livanos
Sept 16	Bruce Corcoran, Pete Gikkas and George Kokalis
Sept 23	Peter Eliades, George Georgeson and Scott Walters
Sept 30	Alex Slenkin, George Sotiras and Tony Kosmas

## The Word

Monthly Newsletter

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**September 2012**



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### KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS

Please use this list to pray for members of our parish and others who are sick or in need of God's care.

- Mary Camamis
- Alexandra Edrich
- Fr. Haralambos Fox
- Heloisa Gavallos
- James Kolyvas

From time to time, we may remove names that have been on the list for awhile. If you feel a name should remain on the list, or if you would like a new name placed on the list, **please contact the office.**

# Parish Activities & Ministries

## Philoptochos

Summer is winding down, and whether yours was on-the-go or a much needed relaxing summer, we hope you had a wonderful time and are relaxed, invigorated and ready to get back to your daily routine.

Philoptochos had a surprisingly busy summer with activities every weekend starting the end of July with our Beach Blanket Babylon and dinner outing.

The following weekend we visited the Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga. The monastery is quite a beautiful facility, and the sisters were very gracious, giving us a tour of their beautiful facility, including stories about many of the icons in their chapel. Before lunch we attended a 6th hour service. A delicious Lenten lunch was prepared by the sisters, and you hardly realized it was Lenten at all. After lunch Mother Melania gave an inspiring lecture. Many who could not attend want us to plan another outing in the future, which sounds like a wonderful idea since we had such a nice time.

On August 12th we met at church for our work party and actually finished everything on our list. There were eleven of us altogether, including Father Luke, who was vacuuming, mopping, and dusting right along with the rest of us. Our two-hour plan turned into four hours because we all wanted to complete the job. It was a very enjoyable and fulfilling project. Our next work party is planned for December and should be much easier.

Last but not least, we had the baby shower for Presbyteria Eleni. The weather was fantastic, and the food was delicious thanks to Amalia Haginicols and all the ladies who helped out in the kitchen. Lena Kokalis and Floretta Burrows took care of the decorations, which fit the occasion nicely, including the clothesline hung between two oak trees on the back patio filled with "drying" baby onesies. We couldn't have done it without the help of Vickie Gikkas and Susan Stockton, my co-chairs, and those who helped set up, bring food, and donate towards our expenses. A special thanks goes out to Evan Meehan and Pete Gikkas who

stepped up to the task of setting up the tent. Also, to John Stockton who blew off all the decks only to come to church the next day and see them full of leaves again! Thank you so very much for your help. We all pulled together, like the family we are, to make this a special day for Presbyteria Eleni and Father Luke. Can't wait for the blessed day!

### Coffee Hour

The fellowship hour schedule will go back up on the bulletin board so we can start planning our fall and winter activities. Memorials, anniversaries, birthdays and name days are just a few reasons to sign up and host a fellowship coffee hour. As we have said before, all you have to do is get together with your family or friends and bring a little bite to eat after Liturgy. Coffee will be prepared for you and put on the serving table. We will also provide juice and Oreos for the children. So all you have to do is bring some goodies, plate them, and put them on the serving tables....Easy! It's a great way to greet everybody and get to know one another. If you are unable to "host" a fellowship hour, dropping off something on your way to Liturgy is also a tremendous help and is extremely appreciated.

### Dates to Remember

**Sep 4** Board Meeting, 6:30 pm

**Sep/Oct TBA** Holy Cross Luncheon

## Folk Dancing

Greek dance rehearsals resume in September on Wednesdays. **The precise date is still to be determined.** Children in grades pre-K through 6th will meet 5:30-6:30 pm, grades 7 through 12 will meet 7:00-9:00 pm. College and adult dancers meet Tuesday evenings. Rehearsals are for elementary, high school and adult dancers interested in learning and performing Greek folk dances, no experience necessary to join (just a willingness to commit and have fun). Please contact Effie Fourakis for more information, 415-823-9433 or [efiejf@me.com](mailto:efiejf@me.com).



Fr. Luke recently visited Sonoma Raceway at Sears Point (formerly Infineon Raceway) during the GoPro Indy Grand Prix of Sonoma weekend events. He is pictured here with legendary driver, Mario Andretti.



## Youth Religious Education News

### Youth Religious Education

As we prepare to launch our 2012-2013 Nativity Youth Religious Education Program (typically known as Sunday School), please allow your conviction toward the substance of this beautiful program to be strengthened by the following two quotes from **Saint John Chrysostom**, in guiding parents to raise their children in proper fashion:

*"Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If from the beginning we teach them to love true wisdom, they will have greater wealth and glory than riches can provide. If a child learns a trade, or is highly educated for a lucrative profession, all this is nothing compared to the art of detachment from riches; if you want to make your child rich, teach him this. He is truly rich who does not desire great possessions, or surround himself with wealth, but who requires nothing...Don't think that only monks need to learn the Bible; Children about to go out into the world stand in greater need of Scriptural knowledge."* — Homilies on Ephesians, Homily 21

*"Never deem it an unnecessary thing that he should be a diligent hearer of the divine Scriptures. For there the first thing he hears will be this, 'Honor thy father and thy mother'; so that this makes for thee. Never say, this is the business of monks. Am I making a monk of him? No. There is no need he should become a monk. Why be so afraid of a thing so replete with so much advantage? Make him a Christian."* — Homilies on Ephesians, Homily 21

We will initiate our Sunday Education Program with a **BBQ celebration on September 16th**, where formal registration will take place. The following **Sunday, September 23rd, we will begin our first day**

**Parent Orientation, Sunday, September 30th.** Fr. Luke and Kathy Marshall will meet with parents of our Sunday School children following Liturgy to share their vision for this new year in the education of our children within our church. This is a year of re-energizing our Education Program, and we look forward to every parent joining us in the process! See you on September 30th!

### Registration Materials

Sunday School registration materials for 2012-2013 will be mailed the last week of August. The packet includes a registration form that needs to be completed and mailed back in the envelope provided. If you do not receive this packet, please contact the church office (883-1998) and request that it be mailed to you.

### Thank You

We express our thanks to **Dennis and Anna Cordellos** for their very generous donation toward the purchase of white boards for the classrooms. May our Lord continue to bless you!



## Altar Boy Retreat

What:	A few hours of fellowship, encouragement, and instruction for Nativity of Christ altar boys.	
Who:	A mini-retreat for all those currently serving, or interested in serving, in the Holy Altar.	
When:	Saturday, September 1st, 10 am - 1 pm.	
Where:	Inside the church.	
Schedule:	10:00 am	Introduction & Discussion
	11:00 am	Celebration of the Divine Liturgy with interludes of instruction.
	12:00 noon	Lunch (provided)
	12:30 pm	Discussion
	1:00 pm	Dismissal

### Beginning of the New Church Year September 1

*O Maker of all creation, Who have established the times and the seasons in Your own power: Bless the crown of this year with Your goodness, O Lord, and keep our rulers and Your flock in peace, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us.*

Troparion of the Beginning  
of the New Church Year

## We Had a Busy Summer!

Nativity hosted two summer day camps: **Nativity Basketball Camp** & **Nativity Summer Church Camp!** Both experiences were blessed and considered successful, as dozens of youth, from both inside and outside of the Nativity family, came to this holy campus and experienced Orthodox Christianity through fellowship, instruction, and prayer. Enjoy some of the pictures from our Nativity Summer Day Camps, and pray for these ministries and their continued growth in the future!



# 2012 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

## Stewardship

On August 11, 2012, the Nativity community experienced a tremendous display of stewardship, as several parishioners gathered at the church to clean the sanctuary! Mops, brooms, vacuums, cloths, and spray bottles in hand -- faithful individuals took the day, and the energy that God had provided them, and responded with an effort to beautify His House! Thank you to our Philoptochos ladies, who initiated this stewardship experience, and all those involved as you glorified God through your response to His grace! Through these acts of good and responsible stewardship, let us all be inspired to be the best Christian stewards that we have the capacity to be!

2012 Stewardship Update  
August 27, 2012

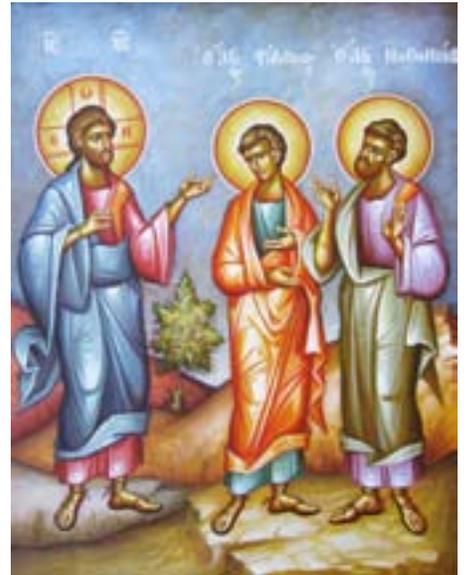
Number of Commitment Cards Received	249
Total Amount Committed	\$183,908
Budgeted Goal	\$225,000

### **Stewardship Commitments Received between 6/24/12 and 8/27/12**

Kosmas, Anthony  
Lardas, Michael

#### **Thank You**

We thank those listed above, as well as the others previously listed, for their response to the 2012 Stewardship Campaign.



## **First Day of Youth Religious Education Classes Sunday, September 23**

### **Beautification Within God's House**

It is a sacred experience to beautify the Church in any way. We enter God's House and receive from Him in the most profound fashion through the Sacraments that heal our souls. It is the responsibility of every Christian community to beautify the space in which God abundantly bestows His grace, to the very best of its ability!

From its very beginning, the Nativity community has understood this experience of beautification as borne witness in our history: a beautiful location selected for the Church, a fervent intent to construct a permanent Church, the commissioning of a gifted iconographer, the consecration of the sanctuary, etc., etc., etc...

This Nativity experience of beautifying God's House continues! Through generous offerings by parishioners, we anxiously anticipate some new ecclesiastical items:

**New Altar Boy Robes!** Through the offering of John and Susan Stockton, we have ordered two new custom made sets of altar boy robes! The Gold/Gold/Red robes will be worn on typical Sundays, and the Burgundy/Gold robes will be worn during all Lenten periods. All robes are being hand sewn.

**New Exapteryga Set!** Through the offering of Spiro and Mary Kay Stratigos, in memory of Spiro's parents, Ted and Eleni Stratigos, a new processional cross & fans have been ordered. The set is currently being hand carved from oak wood and will have hand-painted iconography in their centers. The wood work has been commissioned to world-renowned Ecclesiastical Wood Carver, Mr. Kavroulakis of Crete, Greece.

**New Censor!** Through an anonymous offering, a new silver censor has been ordered and is currently being

customized before arrival to Nativity!

Through these offerings, we continue the responsible Nativity history of the beautification of God's house. A fund has been established at the church for such offerings. If you would like to sponsor a particular item or make a general donation to church beautification, please speak to Father Luke, or send donations directly to the church office.

Thank you to our donors, and may our Lord Who provides always bless your offerings!



# NATIVITY OF CHRIST

C H U R C H C A L E N D A R

# SEPTEMBER

2 0 1 2

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 13th Sunday of Matthew Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 	3	4 • Bible Study 10:00 a.m.  • Philoptochos Board Meeting 6:30 pm	5  •Orthodoxy 101 6:00 pm	6  Acolyte Retreat Saturday, September 1 10:00 am - 1:00 pm	7  Divine Liturgy 11:00 am New Church Year	8 Nativity of the Theotokos Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 
9 Sunday Before the Holy Cross Divine Liturgy 9:30 am  Youth Religious Education Teachers Meeting 11:30-12:30	10	11 • Bible Study 10:00 a.m.  • Parish Council 7:30 pm	12  •Orthodoxy 101 6:00 pm	13  7:00 pm Feast Day Vespers at Holy Cross Belmont	14 The Exaltation of the Holy Cross Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 	15
16 Sunday After the Holy Cross Divine Liturgy 9:30 am  Youth Religious Education Kickoff Barbeque	17	18 • Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	19	20	21	22
23 1st Sunday of Luke Divine Liturgy 9:30 am  Youth Religious Education Classes Begin	24	25 • Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	26	27	28	29 •Baptism 11:00 am
30 2nd Sunday of Luke Divine Liturgy 9:30 am  • Sunday School follows Youth Religious Education Parent Orientation	Oct. 1	2 • Bible Study 10:00 a.m.	3	4	5	6



# Presvytera's Baby Shower...

# Thank You All!

To our Nativity Philoptochos and all those from the community who prayed, planned, worked, and attended the beautiful baby shower offered to Presvytera Eleni -- our family would like to express our great sense of gratitude! The decorations, the feast, the gifts, and, most important, the fellowship were all overwhelming expressions of love that we felt and continue to thank God for. Your generosity and love have impacted our family, and we look forward to growing together for many years...

With Love & Appreciation in Christ,  
+The Palumbis Family

## 2012 Festival Results



The numbers are in (\$156,653 gross income), the bills are paid (\$62,900 in expenses) and we have good news for all. The net proceeds of this year's Festival are \$93,753 -- \$22,000 more than last year's net and an all time record high! A check for \$4,700.00 has been sent to our Charity Partner, Senior Access, and the remainder is going into the parish operating funds.

Thank you to Festival Chairs: **Connie Captanian, Fran Corcoran, and Rose Hunter**, and to their Festival Committee, **Amalia Haginicols, Sophia Stathis, Cindy Daifotis, and Stacey Weeks**, for the many hours they contributed in planning and execution. In addition, a huge thank you to all who participated in many varying capacities behind the scenes and on the front lines.



Congratulations!

## Community News and Events

### **Feast Day Vespers** **Holy Cross Church, Belmont** **Thursday, September 13** **7:00 pm**

The parish of Holy Cross Church in Belmont will celebrate Vespers in honor of the Feast of the Holy Cross on **Thursday, September 13, at 7:00 pm**. Everyone is encouraged to join them in this celebration of their Feast Day.

### Area Festivals

The **Belmont Greek Festival** will be held Labor Day weekend, **Saturday, September 1 through Monday, September 3**, at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 900 Alameda (corner of Ralston Ave.), in Belmont. For information, call (650) 591-4447, or visit <http://www.goholycross.org/>.

**Sacramento Greek Festival**, sponsored by **Annunciation Church**, will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center (400 J Street) on Friday - Sunday, August 31-September 2. Hours

are 11 am - 11 pm on Friday, August 31; Noon - 11 pm on Saturday, September 1; and Noon - 10 pm on Sunday, September 2. Visit <http://annunciation.ca.goarch.org/foodfestival/> or call 916-443-2743 for additional information.

**Contra Costa Greek Food Festival** will be held at **St. Demetrios Church in Concord, Friday, September 14 through Sunday, September 16**. For information, call (925) 676-6967, or visit <http://www.stdemetrios.ca.goarch.org/>.

**A Taste of Greece** at **Annunciation Cathedral in San Francisco, Sept 21, 22 and 23**. Visit <http://www.annunciation.org/about/festival-2010/> or call 415-864-8000 for information.



*"The merciful person is he who gives to others what he has himself received from God, whether it be money, food, strength, a helpful word, prayer or anything else that he has through which he can express his compassion for those in need. At the same time he considers himself a debtor since he has received more than he is asked to give."*

St. Peter of Damascus

**NATIVITY OF CHRIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
**Youth Religious Education Program**



**2012-13**

**Mark Your Calendar!**

**The First Day of Classes**  
**is September 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Registration Packets are being mailed this week!**  
**Please complete registration forms and return them**  
**to the church by Sunday, September 16.**

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**Sunday, September 16**

**Welcome BBQ for students and families**  
following Divine Liturgy

**On the Grounds of our Own Nativity Campus!**



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**Sunday, September 30**

**Parent Orientation**

following Divine Liturgy



Meet with Father Luke and Kathy Marshall  
to share the vision for this year's Christian Education  
program.

# Sacraments and Rites

## Baptisms

July 14 **Thalia Emma**, daughter of Marlon and Andrea Morales. Sponsor was Vicki Kalabokes.

July 30 **Athena and Petra**, daughters of Nicolas and Katrin Maduros. Sponsors were Steve Mills and Zoe Maduros.

August 21 **Erin Mieko Miwa**, daughter of Glen and Laura Miwa. Sponsor was Eirini Kartzaferi.

*"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."*

## Congratulations

To the **Rev. Fr. James Adams** on the occasion of the 57th anniversary of his ordination to the holy priesthood on August 15.

*"Axios! Axios! Axios!"*

## Weddings

June 30 **Stephanie Gryfakis** and **Michael Doucette**. Koumbara was Helen Gryfakis Ripley.

August 25 **Eileen Erdmann** and **Nicholas Jacoby**. Koumbara was Kara Erdmann.

August 25 **Kristin Hultsman** and **Michael John Lardas**. Koumbaro was John Vlahos.

*"You have set on their heads crowns of precious stones."*



## Artoclasia

July 22 In honor of St. Markella and for the health of the members of the **Agia Markella Chian Society**.

*"Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing."*

## Memorials

July 29 Estes (Steve) Smyrni

August 19 Jeanne Brzycki

*"May their memory be eternal."*

## Condolences

To Jeff and Tracey Brzycki and their family on the recent passing of Jeff's mother, **Jeanne Brzycki**, in Wisconsin; and to Peter and Ann George on the passing of Ann's cousin in Rohnert Park.

*"May their memory be eternal."*

## Orthodox Christian Contacts & Resources

OCF: Orthodox Christian Fellowship (Young Adults) 1-800-919-10CF (1623), [www.ocf.net](http://www.ocf.net)

OCN: Orthodox Christian Network (Radio), 1-877-2RECEIVE (1-877-273-2348), [www.receive.org](http://www.receive.org)

GOARCH: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, 212-570-3500, [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)



AFR: Ancient Faith Radio (Internet-based Orthodox radio 24 hours per day), [www.ancientfaithradio.com](http://www.ancientfaithradio.com)



If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and ... the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness....  
Isaiah 58:10, NIV

**Know that material alms should always be followed by spiritual alms: with affectionate, brotherly and pure-hearted love for your neighbor. Do not allow him to notice that he is become beholden to you, do not appear proud. See that your material alms do not lose their value through your failure to provide the spiritual.**

*St. John of Kronstadt*



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## *Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14*

*Save, O Lord, Your people and  
bless Your inheritance; grant  
victory to the faithful against  
the adversaries of the Faith.  
And protect Your people by  
Your precious cross.*

*Troparion of the Exaltation  
of the Holy Cross*

